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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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FILE: WAC 02 116 55584 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date: **FEB 3 2004**

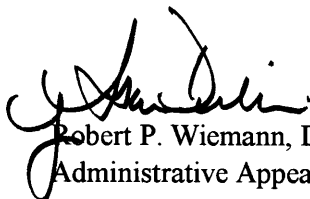
IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:

PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.


Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The service center director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition, and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner is a television production and broadcasting business that seeks to employ the beneficiary as a director of translation. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101 (a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

The director denied the petition because the proffered position is not a specialty occupation. On appeal, counsel submits a brief and other documentation.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (i)(1), defines the term "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires:

- (A) theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and
- (B) attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A), to qualify as a specialty occupation, the position must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the particular position;
- (2) The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, an employer may show that its particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree;
- (3) The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position; or
- (4) The nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) interprets the term "degree" in the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A) to mean not just any baccalaureate or higher degree, but one in a specific specialty that is directly related to the proffered position.

The record of proceeding before the AAO contains: (1) Form I-129 and supporting documentation; (2) the director's Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID); (3) the petitioner's response to the director's NOID; (4) the director's denial letter; and (5) Form I-290B and supporting documentation. The AAO reviewed the record in its entirety before issuing its decision.

The petitioner is seeking to extend the beneficiary's H1b status, which was granted based on the same duties as director of translation for the same petitioner. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties in the record includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's January 22, 2002 letter in support of the petition; and the petitioner's response to the director's NOID. According to this evidence, the beneficiary would perform duties that entail the direction and coordination of translation activities, supervision of translators, and budget administration. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the job does not require a degree in a specific specialty. The director determined that the petitioner failed to establish any of the criteria found at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A).

On appeal, counsel states that the proffered position has a Department of Labor *O*Net* Education and Training Code of 5, which requires a degree. Counsel also asserts that a baccalaureate degree is a normal minimum requirement for the position of translator; hence, the director of translation should also possess a baccalaureate degree. Finally, counsel points out that a petition for the same beneficiary in the same position was previously approved.

Upon review of the record, the petitioner has established none of the four criteria outlined in 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Therefore, the proffered position is not a specialty occupation.

The AAO turns first to the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) and (2): a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is the normal minimum requirement for entry into the particular position; a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations; or a particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree.

Factors often considered by CIS when determining these criteria include: whether the Department of Labor's (DOL) *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)* reports that the industry requires a degree; whether the industry's professional association has made a degree a minimum entry requirement; and whether letters or affidavits from firms or individuals in the industry attest that such firms "routinely employ and recruit only degreed individuals." See *Shanti, Inc. v. Reno*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 1151, 1165 (D.Minn. 1999)(quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Slattery*, 764 F. Supp. 872, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1991)).

The AAO routinely consults the *Handbook* for its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. A review of the translator job description in the *Handbook* confirms the accuracy of the director's assessment that the proffered position, albeit a supervisory position, does not require a degree in a specific specialty.

Counsel's reference to and assertions about the relevance of information from the *O*Net* are not persuasive. An Education and Training category does not indicate that a particular occupation requires the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty as a minimum for entry into the occupation. An Education and Training category is meant to indicate only the total number of years of vocational preparation required for a particular position. This classification does not describe how those years are to be divided among training, formal education, and experience, nor specifies the particular type of degree, if any, that a position would require.

Regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry, the petitioner submitted one Internet job posting for a

translator along with general information from the Internet about careers in translation. It is noted that there is no evidence to show that the employer issuing the job posting is similar to the petitioner, or that the advertised position is parallel to the instant position. All of the submitted information indicates that individuals with degrees in diverse fields such as languages, science, or business may enter into the position of translator.

The record also does not include any evidence from professional associations regarding an industry standard requirement for a degree in a specific specialty, or documentation to support the complexity or uniqueness of the proffered position. The petitioner has, thus, not established the criteria set forth at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) or (2).

The AAO now turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(3) - the employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position. On appeal, counsel points out that this beneficiary, who is a college graduate, has previously held the proffered position. The AAO notes, however, that each nonimmigrant petition is a separate proceeding with a separate record. See 8 C.F.R. § 103.8(d). If the prior petition was approved based on evidence that was substantially similar to the evidence contained in this record of proceeding, the approval of the prior petition would have been erroneous. CIS is not required to approve petitions where eligibility has not been demonstrated, merely because of prior approvals that may have been erroneous. See, e.g., *Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 597 (Comm. 1988). The record does not contain any evidence of the petitioner's past hiring practices of any other directors of translation; therefore, the petitioner has not met its burden of proof in this regard. See *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972).

Finally, the AAO turns to the criterion 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(iii)(A)(4) - the nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

To the extent that they are depicted in the record, the duties do not appear so specialized and complex as to require the highly specialized knowledge associated with a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty. Therefore, the evidence does not establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(4).

As related in the discussion above, the petitioner has failed to establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. Accordingly, the AAO shall not disturb the director's denial of the petition.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not sustained that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The petition is denied.